

Personal Advisor Celebration Awards

2023

Introduction

We want to celebrate the commitment and dedication of Personal Advisors by showcasing individuals and teams that have gone above and beyond in their support for young people who are care experienced.

Within this booklet are the nominees for the following categories: Rising Star, Life Time Achiever, PA Team of the Year and PA of the Year



Rising Star Nominations

This award is for those Personal Advisors who are or have been in post for less than two years and have gone above and beyond what would be expected of them.



Name: Emma Gill, Kent
Nominated By - Elaine Simcock

What has the individual done ?

Emma is an excellent advocate for her young people and a great team player supporting her colleagues. She brings with her knowledge from her previous role in the secure estate and appropriately challenges other agencies where necessary.

Emma always makes an extra effort to take advantage of any opportunities for training, therapy or employment for her young people and if there are any events, Emma is always a PA that brings young people along. She has a reputation from other agencies as excellent and I second that.

What impact did it have?

Emma will fight for her young people's rights to get them the services they need. She is persistent and will not give in if something is too difficult. Her work is always in good shape and she has excellent relationships with her young people and peers.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Strong, persistent, thoughtful and reflective. Emma is a kind and compassionate person who genuinely cares for her young people. She is not afraid to challenge others and is a pleasure to have in the team a real asset to the service.

**Name: Alice Wilson, Somerset
Nominated By - Dan Knott**

What has the individual done?

Alice continues to build meaningful and trusting relationships with her young people. The feedback she receives from her young people is inspiring and the footprint she leaves on their lives is everlasting. Alice works with a number of complex young people who struggle with their mental health. She specialises in co-ordinating the right support for them and she continues to be a fierce advocate regarding decision making and planning for their future.

Alice is care experienced, and this insight has changed and shaped how we can best support young people in Somerset. Alice has created a number of resources for her young people to express their feelings and emotions so she can best support them. One of the creative resources Alice devised was a 'stress & worry' book which was bespoke, encompassing the young peoples likes and favorite things.

What impact did it have?

The feedback Alice receives from her young people is inspiring. I have included two quotes which gives her work justice in how well she can build meaningful relationships with her young people.

'I am so grateful for the support. Alice is has amazing, she is very good and supportive. Alice, honestly has been the best. I've been fine with all my social workers but she is something else, she follows up on things, she gets me and I am so thankful to her.

'Alice has been amazing, she listens to me so intently, I've never had someone care as much as she does.

She is amazing. The smallest concern, she listens. When I am doing well she still take into count that things are hard. She doesn't push her views on me.'

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Alice has shown great resilience not only in her personal life but also as a professional. She cares deeply for her young people and this creates great accountability in building trusting relationships.

At 23 years old, she has a very mature head on young shoulders and she shows great motivation to learn and develop as professional.

Alice has aspirations to move up within the service and reach for the stars; I believe all social work professionals can learn from Alice's practice. Alice has also changed my life; she has been the challenge and inspiration that we all need in our lives.

Name: Manjit Cheema, Wolverhampton
Nominated By - Gemma Northern

What has the individual done ?

Manjit started as a young person's advisor in November 2022 in a newly created UASC champion role. In this short space of time (8 months!) Manjit has certainly supported in making a difference to UASC within Wolverhampton. Manjit has developed a small group of "UASC ambassadors" whom are care leavers within our service. The group meet regularly with a focus on supporting each other as well as enhancing the service offer for UASC coming into Wolverhampton.

To date the group have supported in reviewing the local offer to care leavers which has led to a specific UASC page on our website. The group have also recently been trained as "health champions" something they will utilise as they look to begin their UASC wellbeing group later in the year. As well as supporting UASC Manjit is always on hand to support other YPAs and Social workers across the service.

What impact did it have?

The service feels much more inclusive which has been really positive for all. We now have an arena for the voices of our UASC to be heard. Our UASC ambassadors are passionate about enhancing the experiences of others who arrive in our Local Authority area. Manjit has recently led on two fantastic events at our care leaver hub, one celebrating Eid and the other as part of Refugee week. These two events really saw an integration of our UASC within our care leaver community. It also provided an opportunity for our Care leavers that attend our hub to learn more about other cultures, taste different foods which they really enjoyed. As we have started to see a small increase in numbers of initial refusals in claims for UASC our wellbeing group and the support offered by our ambassadors will be a welcome support.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Manjit is a hard working individual, he is committed to enhancing the service to care leavers who are UASC within Wolverhampton.

In a short amount of time he has really developed the service for the better with his organisation and forward thinking.

Manjit has demonstrated his ability to be resourceful linking in with many professionals both within Wolverhampton and regionally of his own accord.

Manjit is clearly effective in building effective working relationships and his UASC ambassadors keep returning and want to engage and better the service for all which speaks volumes about the work he has put in.

Manjit is empathetic to those that he works with and strives for the best for individuals and the wider service. He is a very calming character which again I think has helped in the success of his UASC group. I look forward to what more has to come!

**Name: Chase Dowling, Herefordshire
Nominated By - Holly Williams**

What has the individual done ?

Chase hasn't been in post very long and he has hit the ground running. He has made very good relationships with the young people and uses a relationship based approach, he is very person centered when it comes to visits and speaking to young people. At the moment we do not have a participation team in our council and Chase is organising all the fun events for care experienced young people, he is meeting with local businesses to arrange free events, he has got free football tickets for matches, theatre tickets, he even organised the care leavers football tournament which was held in Hereford! He is doing 2 roles and he has a case load of about 25 young people. I feel Chase deserves the rising star award as he understands our young people and has a bright career ahead of him.

What impact did it have?

As we don't have a participation team nor a youth group running no longer -

Chase has taken it up to organise these events so the young people do not miss out.

He is getting more and more interest from care experienced young people and goes to every fun event we hold. Our care leavers now have a safe space to come too and they can meet other people and make friends because of the hard work Chase has put in.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Chase is very person centred, caring, calm, chatty, good listener. The young people very get on with Chase, and as he is young himself, they can relate to Chase and they open up more to him.

Name: Freda Ahmed, Surrey
Nominated By - Emma Wheadon

What has the individual done ?

Freda has evidenced her ability to successfully manage an extremely complex case load encompassing

the difficult balance of eligibility between both Children and Adults services.

Freda, in her role as Personal Advisor has taken responsibility for writing court statements and chronologies for a young person on a court of protection order and has given evidence directly in court despite this being out of her role remit.

Freda has subsequently been involved in legal discussions and large multi-agency professionals meetings to discuss S117 aftercare planning, inclusive of accommodation for another young person discharged from section 3 inpatient care without proper support services in place.

Freda has been able to advocate on behalf of these young people at a time where Adult Services eligibility assessments were being undertaken to ensure their voice is heard, and appropriate pathway planning is in place for them.

Senior management and myself have acknowledged our own learning from these young people's situations at a time where Freda has needed to work at an operational level

to support her care leavers both practical and emotionally, whilst being present as part of the larger professional network to explore and confirm strategic planning.

What impact did it have?

Freda's tenacious and passionate approach, alongside her exceptional ability to progress care planning for care leavers has had a substantial impact upon both her allocated young people and the SE Surrey Care Leavers Service. Freda has been able to successfully bring together joint working between multi-agency partners to allow for smooth transitions to take place, thereby avoiding the need for recovery orders through court for one young person and the threat of homelessness for another.

Freda's determination to best support her care leavers has been evidenced through her daily correspondence to ensure adequate care planning and safety planning are in place. Her effective progress with this has reduced the need for external senior management escalation and internal requests for information sharing.

Freda's hard work and person centred practice has resulted in these respective care leavers now residing in much more stable accommodation provisions with extensive support networks around them.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Freda's main attribute is her motivation to understand a young person's situation and to support them in feeling listened to and included in their own care planning. I have observed Freda de-escalating heightened young people as part of Best Interests Meetings through her awareness of effective communication and empathy.

This is not an easy task, especially as part of complex meetings but she has the professional confidence to take ownership of this so the young person stays at the centre of the discussion. Freda knows her care leavers well and is trusted by them.

Freda listens and advocates for young people, she remains professionally curious and will make full use of the network so that effective collaborative working is in place.

Freda continues to go above and beyond the expectations of her role in her direct work with young people whilst ensuring that case recording and required referrals are completed.

Lifetime Achiever Nominations

This award is for those personal Advisors who have been in post for more than 15 years and have shown amazing patience, kindness and resilience when working with young people.



Name: Abeba Stewardson, Manchester
Nominated By - Sarah Humphries

What has the individual done ?

Abeba has worked for Manchester Leaving care for over 20 years. She has supported hundreds of young people over the years. Abeba is loved by her young people both past and present. Abeba strives for the best for all of young people and has made a difference to some many over the years. Abeba tirelessly advocates for her young people and is especially skilled in empowering young people with their mental health. Abeba deserves recognition for a lifetime of dedication and hard work to the care leavers of Manchester.

What impact did it have?

Abeba has supported positive outcomes for hundreds of Manchester care leavers, one that sticks out is a young person who was deported to the Netherlands due to criminality. Abeba worked hard to establish relationships with after care services in the Netherlands, who offered some initial support and guided

Abeba to support the young person to access services. With Abeba's support this young person is about to graduate from university and lives independently, establishing his new life in the Netherlands. Abeba hopes to visit the yp in the Netherlands and celebrate his graduation with him.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Abeba is one of the most knowledgeable Personal advisors we have at Manchester and is well respected by all staff and young people. She is kind, patient, understanding and empathetic. If I was a Manchester Care Leaver I would want Abeba as my PA. Abeba develops life long relationships with young people, who remain in contact even after closure. Manchester is lucky to have Abeba and I can rest easy knowing our young people are advocated for, empowered and cared for.

**Name: Venetia Bradbury,
Herefordshire**

**Nominated By - Holly Williams, Emma
Rousell, Ed Lindsay & Naomi Alleyne**

Venetia has been a Personal Adviser in Herefordshire for 25 years. Venetia has been recognised by the council for lifetime achievement in the council for employment but hasn't had her individual work recognised.

Venetia goes above and beyond for young people ensuring they meet their targets, she completes a substantial amount of housing work with them especially those who are homeless. Venetia has started running a young parents group which has been a success. Venetia is also close to retiring herself and she should be recognised for the amount of work she has devoted and her time with the young people over 25 years.

Venetia was also a youth worker before being a PA and still keeps in contact with many young people who are over 25 years.

What impact did it have?

As a service, Venetia always keeps the team together, she is the glue that holds us all together.

Venetia knows how best to support and speak to young people especially those who can appear to be most difficult, she supports the staff and their well being when times are very hard.

Venetia cares for everyone in the team and cares for the young people and isn't afraid to challenge managers when they choose a different outcome for a person when they do not know them. She isn't afraid to do the right thing.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

They are, Trusting, Caring, Great at listening. They complete direct work and supports YP with homelessness and works after hours if needed.

**Name: Jayne Ratcliffe, Blackpool
Nominated By - Katie Jenkins**

What has the individual done?

Jayne has been part of the service for over 20 years and dedicated a large portion of her life to the young people who are care leavers within Blackpool. She continues to deliver a high quality service which has the voice of the YP at the heart of it.

What impact did it have?

Many different outcomes have been reached over the years for Jayne, she has been able to establish relationships with hard to reach YP, she has had successes with finding YP housing, she has supported into other services such as mental health, she has facilitated family time and she has often acted as a mediator between family members. Jaynes role varies from day to day and the impact she has had has been outstanding.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Develops professional working relationships quickly to overcome barriers and identify support needs.

Jayne continues to offer a high level of support to our YP. Jayne is trauma informed, she is sensitive and caring and always puts the feelings of her YP first.

Name: Dave Owen, Derbyshire
Nominated By - Leanne Christian

What has the individual done ?

Dave has extensive experience of working with care experienced young people so has a wealth of knowledge, insight and understanding of their challenges. He builds incredible relationships with his young people, who see him as a father figure and someone who is dependable, reliable and committed to them and their needs.

Dave recently visited one young person on duty who we have struggled to see regularly, and she beamed when she saw him.

He since advocated to be allocated to her knowing that having an established relationship with her from earlier in her care experience would help keep her in touch and has now been able to support her with finding appropriate accommodation. He is a pioneer in the team with setting up and running groups and events for young people including cooking groups which aim to improve their interdependence whilst also encouraging them to use our hub.

He also recently supported a 25-year-old in crisis who sought him out at our young person hub for help when she was struggling with her mental health and was in crisis with bills, demonstrating our 'no young person ever closes to our service' ethos.

What impact did it have?

Young people grow up with Dave as a stable and dependable person to come to for help. He gives them comfort and stability and they know that they will receive a never giving up approach, regardless of their age or situation. He is no nonsense when it comes to parental boundaries, but young people respond positively to this, as they know it always comes from a place of care.

He never forgets a face and young people feel valued and respected by Dave which is why they seek him out for support. He always listens to young people and will always advocate for their rights and entitlements, appropriately challenging the systems that create barriers for them. Dave is passionate about developing interdependence for young people and this underpins his drive to create groups and events for them where they can achieve this.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Dave is naturally parental to our young people and understands their disadvantage which drives his passion to achieve the best possible outcomes for them. His long-standing role as a pa means he has seen the service evolve and he has adapted well to this, ensuring that with any change, he continues to advocate for the rights and interests of young people. Dave is an integral part of the team, bringing a strong and committed work ethic at all times, with banter, fun and light

heartedness that is so important in keeping morale high in such a demanding role. He is praised regularly by his young people, colleagues and supervisor for his reliability, commitment and passion. He is honest, communicative, and consistent which makes for an inspirational role model to those around him.

Name: Keith Mundy, Wolverhampton
Nominated By - Emma Kirkland

What has the individual done ?

Keith has been a YPA for 15+ years, supporting care leavers, he's called Daddy Keith by many young female YP and now grandad Keith to those with children. Keith has specifically worked extremely well with Young females at risk of sexual exploitation and has allowed YP to feel comfortable in discussing sensitive areas of their lives not feeling judged or ashamed. Keith has made many females feel secure and safe around a male and has helped them increase their confidence and self-worth.

Nothing has fazed Keith, he has purchased sanitary products, attending sexual health clinics, addressed and challenged those exploiting YP and visited out of core working hours to attend to crisis. Keith has been a great help in respect of DIY amongst the whole team and has been the go to person to get help with putting up furniture, curtain poles or attempting to repair items.

Keith has had lovely compliments from YP leaving the service and one consistent message is them thanking him for always remembering to send a birthday card often stating it was the only card they received. Keith is the king of the BBQ and often takes the lead on care leaver events involving this.

What impact did it have?

Keith has supported our hard to engage YP to access the service and remove negative stereotypes they have of some professionals. Keith has made YP feel Secure and cared for and some have commented that he does not make it feel it is just a job. Keith makes YP feel like his own family and many wish to keep in contact post leaving care.

Keith completing DIY and putting up flat pack furniture has helped save us money in using odd job guys, buying cheaper furniture or paying for fitting from their SUHG. Keith has saved the service money through helping at events by cooking completing the require food hygiene certificate.

Keith has cooked food well on the BBW meaning we have not needed an external chef impacting on our budget and allowing us to serve food to YP at events.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Keith is a warm and friendly father figure aswell as a grandfather figure to YP and their children. Keith has shown a loving and nurturing approach to his young people making them feel a part of a family network. Keith is a committed and loyal YPA, one of our long-standing members of the team giving YP consistency at the most difficult stage of their lives. Keith is a funny character and has great banter with young people.

Keith has been able to use humour to help YP feel comfortable and see the funny side of situations. Keith works with great integrity and is a very open and honest YPA. This is reflected in his work. He has never made a young person feel discriminated or judged and has challenged this with others when needed. Keith is a great team player and always makes new members feel welcomed and supported.

**Name: Denise Hylton, Southwark
Nominated By - Tina Francis**

What has the individual done ?

Denise has been in the service for approximately 18 years during which she has held several roles within Southwark Children's Services. She has seen young people grow from a child, into an adult. Denise has been a PA for many years and has gained a wealth of knowledge and experience.

Denise now works within the Independence Hub which is for young people 21 -25 years of age; although we offer advice and signposting post 25 years of age.

Denise has helped develop the team, and has helped place a firm foundation to making it a success. Denise offers advice and support to young people, and also to the rest of her team.

The success of developing the team was reliant of the PA's support and understanding of the team role is within Leaving Care Service. Denise has stepped up and shown her commitment, and has helped develop the process of this part of the service.

Denise is in the right role to help develop the Independence Hub because her knowledge, skills, and commitment. Denise is aware of the Hub process, and aware of timescales to complete tasks.

This is a small team, Denise is without a doubt a valued member, and one who is continues to help make positive change.

What impact did it have?

Progression of a team to work with care leavers who are under 25 years of age who are closed to the service, or Care leavers who sit within the Independence Hub.

Over the past 22 months, the team has grown and is providing a positive service - This is due to Denise being committed to growing a new way of working.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

The catch phrase is 'ASK DENISE' because she usually knows and is happy to share her knowledge. Denise is well respected by her peers, you always hear a chuckle coming from the room. Denise is reliable, knowledgeable, and supportive. It is a pleasure to have Denise in the team.

Personal Advisor Team of The Year Nominations

This award is given to the team who have developed a new service and or, made a positive contribution to developing services for young people with care experience.



Name: Walsall Leaving Care Team
Nominated By - Andrew Caville

What has the team done?

The last year has been difficult, we have seen rising case loads as a result of late entrants to care, unexpected arrivals and older CEP returning to the service - all against a backdrop of the cost of living crisis and less community resources available for us to draw on.

Despite this, the TLC team at Walsall have shown resilience and used a range of resources to keep supporting our young people.

They hosted excellent care leaver week and Christmas celebrations and worked late to ensure that every care leaver was delivered a Christmas hamper and gifts and invited to a Christmas meal at our hub. Care leaver week saw the building decorated with sentences giving one thing that makes us proud about every one of our young people.

Through innovative use of the household support fund they have ensured that the Hub is a warm and welcoming place for care leavers, with hot food and drinks available as needed and laundry facilities to help young people struggling with the cost of energy. They have built and strengthened bonds with services such as the energy efficiency team and local industry to secure the best support possible for our young people.

What impact did it have?

Due to this young people have had the warmth and reassurance of their importance to us and our pride in them and their achievements. They have been supported to maintain a positive outlook and the team has remained aspirational for young people even when they struggled to be aspirational for themselves.

The TLC Hub has become a base for young people to visit and access essential advice and support, this is a warm place which displays their achievements with pride.

The team never stop striving for the best for our young people and have put person centred practice at the heart of their planning – always ensuring that the young person is reminded of their importance, their achievement and their potential.

What personal and professional attributes has the team demonstrated to receive this nomination?

The team have always remained focussed on young people and their dreams and aspirations. They have always remained proud of our young people - sometimes this can be difficult when young people struggle with making healthy decisions but our young people can be reassured that their PA's will always be there to help them back on their feet. The team of PA's has a non-judgemental approach and so our young people are confident in approaching their PA for support.

The team is also innovative in the use of the limited resources available, putting in their own time and effort to ensure that young people receive the maximum benefit.

Name: Herefordshire Leaving Care Team

Nominated By - Naomi Alleyne

What has the team done ?

Not sure if this is allowed but I would like to nominate my whole team for the work they have put in especially with participation events in Hereford.

Our Participation team is currently being restructured and all participation events for the Care Experienced young people have been the responsibility of the team since September 2022.

We have set up: leaving Care week a parenting group, Art group, cooking group, football group and will be hosting the regional football tournament this year. We have also hosted consultation meetings, army event days etc with young people.

What impact did it have?

We like to keep the community involved and have really strong partnership work which have made our events even more specially and it is all down to the tireless work of the team.

Herefordshire has received some negative press over the past 3 years, coupled with Covid 19 it has been really difficult to get young people coming back into our building. The tireless work with the team in regards to participation has meant there is a real buzz around the service again and people want to get involved.

What personal and professional attributes has the team demonstrated to receive this nomination?

The team are funny, driven, ambitious and motivated. They are always striving for the best for the young people that they work with.

The compassion and hardwork has really shone and I believe they compliment each other well. The team all have different topics that they champion and work together to provide the best service that we can for care leavers.

Name: Blackpool Leaving Care Service
Nominated By - Mark McElroy

What has the team done ?

The leaving care service in Blackpool are a well-established team who have been together for 6 years. Through his period we have come from being Ofsted inadequate to reaching a rating of Good. This was based on our offer to our young people including, knowing our YP well , weekly contact to provide ongoing support , and co-production of pathway plans.

The team continue to have aspirations collectively for our young people in Blackpool and advocate on their behalf with determination particularly around housing needs, mental health support and education training and employment. I'm very proud of the team and we aim to be outstanding in the future.

What impact did it have?

Our young people have felt better supported, there has been a significant increase in our YP being in some form of education

training employment, our YP are better supported at the point of turning 18 ensuring they are prepared and have relevant ID and accommodation available to them.

Name: Somerset Leaving Care Nominated By - Emma Hix

What has the team done ?

The Mendip Leaving Care Team have taken on the challenge of delivering support to our Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and Adults. They have worked together to help develop this new and expanding area of the service, working hard to meet the needs of this diverse group of young people, working cooperatively with care providers, colleges and community groups to support these young people to integrate successfully into life in Somerset.

They have also met the challenge of delivering a high quality service to those young people living outside of Somerset at a distance but making sure that this does not prevent them from accessing their care leaver entitlements.

What impact did it have?

We are currently supporting over 80 young people seeking asylum in Somerset. We have managed to create a community of young people and care providers who work together to successfully enable young people to achieve good outcomes including running their own businesses and graduating from University.

We have young people achieve their Gold DofE Award and those who have become carers for their young siblings.

What personal and professional attributes has the team demonstrated to receive this nomination?

The team have shown an ability to adapt and learn new skills. They have shown resilience to what at times has been a constant changing set of circumstances and above all have put the well being of the young people they work with first. They have supported each other in their learning and shared their knowledge with other professionals working with the young people they support.

**Name: Surrey Leaving Care
Nominated By - Emma Kirkby**

What has the team done ?

They all offer exceptional support to our young people that is not just 'good enough' but regularly go above and beyond expectations.

They have worked together as a team and have formed effective partnerships with other services while offering professional challenge when needed, to best support our young people, especially those who do not meet the criteria for other services but remain very vulnerable with complex needs and at risk of falling through the cracks.

PA's invest lots of time in building trusting relationships. Encouraging reluctant care leavers to engage through persist, flexible, creative, and non-judgemental practice. Individual pieces of outstanding work include a PA offering significant emotional and practical support through difficult court proceedings and final contact with their child prior to adoption.

Care leavers whose anxiety make it challenging for them to progress; PA's offer reassurance, have worked at the young person's pace, support at appointments, including 7am hospital appointments.

Recognising key anniversaries and dates such as a parents death anniversary. A care leaver told PA "I don't know what I would have done without you here." Through joint visits, sharing of practice; when duty needs to step in care leavers already know other PA's and feel comfortable.

What impact did it have?

Care leavers have trusting, supportive relationships with PA's that nurture successful adult lives; to manage emotional needs, build positive networks of support and feel empowered. The Bright spots survey highlighted how much our care leavers value their relationship with their PA's and the difference they have made to their lives.

Care leaver comments "I have been open to the care leavers service for roughly 5 years and have had many ups and downs. I've had many amazing opportunities so I can better myself.

I've had many struggles within the service too, I wasn't always easy to communicate with, causing working relationships to break down, I have an amazing relationship with my PA and feel able to turn to her for anything or even just a general catch-up about everything that's been going on. I never thought I'd say this; but I'm grateful for the leaving care team."

What personal and professional attributes has the team demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Collectively the team demonstrate consistently high-quality direct work with our care leavers, they are all tenacious, resilient, passionate, and committed. Showing dedication to the team and our care leavers. PA's are very invested in their care leavers, they always show compassion and empathy.

The team always strive to improve practice and the service offered., advocating inclusion, and equality through small changes such as all adopting LGBTQ+ badges and lanyards which has encouraged care leavers to open talk about their experiences.

As a result, care leavers feel valued and have a sense of belonging. BW and HJ are motivational interview champions in the County.

PA's create effective collaboration with partner and third sector organisations, and other teams through good, regular communication & strong advocacy for care leavers.

They work to change the perception and championing the needs of care leavers within adult services in the County.

Personal Advisor of The Year Nominations

This award is Given to a personal adviser who has gone above and beyond the normal high expectations of this critically important role.



Name: Nik Guyatt, Kent
Nominated By - Elaine Simcock

What has the individual done ?

Nik is always authentic and genuine and responsive and reflective. He has brilliant relationships with all of this young people, bringing families together by his sensitive approach and persistence. One young adult was put back in touch with her siblings after several years, another in touch with his brother after years of conflict.

He has several young people with Autism, on his caseload, has completed extra training to upskill and built strong relationships to help these young people communicate and function in the wider world, attending celebratory awards events and moving into their won accommodation. Nik is a real asset to my team and to his young people.

What impact did it have?

Nik invests in his young people which ensures they feel cared for and listened to. The impact is huge as it sets them up with skills.

connected family for their future and they know who to call if they need any support or advice.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Nik is resourceful, persistent and dynamic. he is a lovely individual who exudes 'calm' . His work is always in "tip top" shape and his young people and colleagues alike respect and like him. Nik is reliable, hardworking, a true professional.

Name: Nichola Coulson, Kent
Nominated By - Elaine Simcock

What has the individual done ?

Nichola is a fantastic SPA, she is well liked by her young people and works really hard to get their entitlements. Nichola will always go to the correct source to inform herself accurately so she can support her young people and her team Members.

She is particularly good at getting young people accommodated in their own housing and in building relationships with those who are marginalised for various reasons. Nichola works well with outside agencies to get the best results for her young people whether this be funding for the most appropriate accommodation or preventing someone from being deported by working with his solicitor. She is a great advocate for the under-privileged or marginalized.

What impact did it have?

Nichola has got at least one young person into appropriate supportive accommodation by liaising with adult services colleagues, preventing him from repeated suicide attempts and possibly saving his life. This young person never fails to "sing her praises" as he clearly feels "he wouldn't be where he is without her"

Another young person was threatened with deportation and held in a deportation center but this was averted due to Nichola's concerns and actions with regard to his level of understanding, mental health and capacity.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

They are honest, open, hard working and supportive to young people, colleagues and managers alike. Nichola is a popular SPA with the team and other managers who have found her a pleasure to work with and reported this to me.

Another PA noted he just needed "a Nichola by his side" during a difficult housing matter. Nichola biggest skill is her helpfulness and willingness to learn new skills. She is an absolute asset not only to me but to to our team and the services as a whole.

Name: Julie Ranson, Manchester
Nominated By - Sarah Humpherys

What has the individual done ?

Julie has been integral in establishing the 21-25 year old extended service in Manchester, which has developed from strength to strength. Julie supports those 21-25 who are recessing the service for support, often in crisis situations.

Julie is a consistent, reliable personal advisor who has supported 21-25 years olds in various crisis situations including homelessness, domestic abuse, mental health, immigration, going through care proceeding with their own children and victims of serious crimes. Julie supports the young people through the crisis, being the security blanket when things might go wrong. Julie develops relationships quickly and advocates for the best outcomes for young people.

What impact did it have?

Julie has ensured that hundreds of young people aged 21-25 continue to receive a service from leaving care when things might have gone wrong in their lives.

Julie is the security blanket offering reassurance and ensuring the young person is safeguarded. Julie never lets young people give up on themselves and always has high aspirations. There is a specific case where Julie showed so much perseverance and determination for a young person who was about to turn 25 and close the service.

Julie kept showing up and being consistent, eventually her determination paid off and the yp engaged with Julie and went on to secure her own tenancy and a job before then closing. If it was not for Julie's relentlessness the yp might not have realised their own potential. I know Julie is very important to this young person and was perhaps the first person not to give up on her and allow herself to give up.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Julie is very calm and measured in time of crisis, that is very reassuring to young people. Julie always follows through and shows yp that she can be trusted to have their best interests at heart. Julie is consistent, reliable, passionate and caring. Julie is also very good at holding other professionals accountable in the best interest of her young people. Julie never feels she has done enough but her young people disagree. Julie is well loved by all her young people and always finds a way to show that they matter. I would want Julie fighting and advocating for me and feel reassured that she is there for our older care leavers.

Name: Cody Gorse, Blackpool
Nominated By - Katie Jenkins

What has the individual done ?

Cody works with a number of complex young people and always goes the extra miles, when one YP was homeless, suffering with poor mental and physical health, using substances and missing, she made daily attempts to have face to face contact and ensure the YP's basic care needs were being met. Cody also made a statement for court in relation to this YP, detailing his ACES and due to this, he was kept out of custody. Cody gets on with the job and never expects and recognition, she is emotionally intelligent and trauma informed with her responses.

What impact did it have?

Cody's support kept this young person out of custody, it also meant we had regular sightings and were able to offer food, warm clothes, somewhere to go and support to other services.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Effective communication skills, care, compassion, being trauma informed, resilient, understanding, good multiagency working, determination, organised, hard working.

**Name: Kim White, Blackpool
Nominated By - Katie Jenkins**

What has the individual done ?

Kim manages a high case load and is always compliant, she goes above and beyond for all her young people and has established a number of positive relationships with YP who do not have any other support network.

Kim's knowledge of leaving care processes is exceptional and she has recently buddied up with a new member of staff and set a great example.

What impact did it have?

KITS and Pathway plans coproduced and in date, clearly capturing the YP's voice.

Kim has often rearranged her diary to support YP to housing options preventing homelessness.

YP feeling listened to, cared about, comforted, appreciated and recognising their full potential.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Trauma informed, care, compassionate, organised, good communication skills, being able to capture the YP's voice, ability to build relationships and not judge, a wealth of knowledge around leaving care policies, procedures and safeguarding. Kim also goes the extra mile to ensure the needs of the YP are being met.

**Name: Amy Sutton, Somerset
Nominated By - Dan Knott**

What has the individual done ?

We have identified that we could do more to support our young people to prepare them for adult life and we are focusing on the number of young people who are not in education or employment. In response to this we challenged our leaving care service to drive forward ASDAN and allocated time to Amy Sutton, Senior Leaving Care Worker to join the national steering group for the relaunch of the ASDAN Nationally and then in Somerset.

Amy has been instrumental in rolling out the ASDAN programme here in Somerset. Her approach to multi-agency working, encourages other agencies to embed the programme so our young people are best supported in completing the programme. Amy is working closely with the Virtual School, YMCA, Fostering and independent housing providers to teach and share her knowledge of the programme.

What impact did it have?

Amy has supported to register 58 young people to ASDAN in 2023, this is to complete one of the 5 'moving on' booklets. It includes a mixture of young people who are 16- 17 under CLA and care leavers between 18- 21. The first young people are due to complete within the next few weeks.

Amy has supported in all Senior Leaving Care Worker's in each of the 4 areas to be trained and is leading on the ASDAN for Leaving Care/CLA. Accommodation providers have been/are being provided with training and are on board to deliver ASDAN.

Amy has ensured that Fostering and the Kinship team will be provided with ASDAN training. Many young people are keen to engage with this and are seeing the benefit of learning and engaging with this.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Amy has been instrumental in working with the ASDAN steering group to ensure the programme is young person focused. This creates positive outcomes for our young people, locally and nationally. Her approach is extremely professional and she never loses sight of the young person's voice. Her ability to build positive working relationships with other agencies is to a high standard and this skillset is invaluable in making sure we embed ASDAN here in Somerset.

Name: Dave Short, Gloucestershire
Nominated By - Sonia Cheetham

What has the individual done ?

Dave has worked as a personal advisor for 16 years and has demonstrated a commitment and dedication to YP in Gloucestershire. He has consistently supported all his YP from transition at 18 to them reaching 21, with an average working relationship being 6 years with each of them. He has supported many YP through very distressing and difficult periods in their lives and is very proactive in advocating for them in all arenas, such as, immigration, housing, and criminal and family proceedings.

In one particular situation he continues to support a 28-year-old who is accessing their local authority files, this involved thousands of documents and files and preparing her and supporting her in the reading and content of this information, which is a very long and distressing process.

The work and relationships Dave has with the YP he supports are transparent and working with them. The pathway plans for YP are written very much with their voice and goals evident which is meaningful to them.

Dave is significant in supporting new PA's in the team and social workers, he arranges time to meet with them and help them to understand their role and responsibilities and the needs of the YP.

What impact did it have?

Dave's practice has enabled the YP to receive a consistently good service from the local authority, supporting good practice across the team. The feedback from the YP has been that they have felt cared for, supported and important.

Feedback from YP has included WF – stated he has had a lot of support from GCC and feels this has been brilliant, but the care has been amazing. Always had people showing him care and checking in with him when needs it. Will miss working with Dave, expressed his gratitude and complimented that Dave goes above and beyond and felt they have a positive and supportive relationship.

HR – stated she has felt listened to by Dave and doesn't feel this with others. That she receives unconditional support and how much she recognizes and appreciates this.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Dave is up for a challenge and will volunteer to support any YP in the team or service. Care leavers have been through significant adversity and trauma, which impacts them in many different ways, Dave is empathetic and uses communication that is non-judgemental and enables YP to reach a place of regulation and calm.

Dave cares about achieving good outcomes for YP and empowering them most important to be able to take control.

He demonstrates integrity and this is the thread throughout his work. He has the knowledge and experience to challenge injustice for YP and supporting their rights.

**Name: Rebecca Metcalfe, Staffordshire
Nominated By - Stephen Jones**

What has the individual done ?

Rebecca came into the team to manage the South Staffordshire Leaving Care Team. She has shown considerable care for the team that had changed considerably and introduced new staff to the role.

Despite only being in the role for 18 months she is challenging and rewriting policies and managing a case load. The development of new PA's has been inspiring and her personality has galvanised the team to pull together for the better of our young adults.

The most amazing aspect of Rebecca's practise, is that she develops a relationships with my cohort of young adults. Those she has meet she have huge respect and ask of her well being. I have been a PA for 17years and she is helping me to develop and improve my practise. She is inspirational and although not a PA she still hold a case load and has an impact on the teams young people.

What impact did it have?

Rebecca is a mum with young children and she has developed a relationship with one of my young mums. The impact on this young mum has transformed her from concentrating on just one aspect of her life to balancing being a mum and returning to college to develop a career.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Rebecca has galvanised a new group of people into a team that supports one another. She pushes PA's to develop and learn. She is a guide and mentor.

**Name: Beth Hughes,
Northamptonshire
Nominated By - Lauren Starkey**

What has the individual done ?

Beth runs the Independent Living Programme and also continues to engage our young people with education, training and employment by spending time finding opportunities to for our young people and liaising with the college about courses, attendance and any support they may require. Beth also spends her time helping our young people find apprenticeships and finds opportunities for them to gain maths and English qualifications.

What impact did it have?

We have less NEET but also some of our young people, who wanted apprenticeships who now have the opportunity thanks to her.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Beth is organised and efficient but also kind and generous towards our young people

She goes out of her way to help and is always doing her best to get the best outcomes for our young people and their education as well as supporting PAs to do the same.

**Name: Mae Hayburn, Northamptonshire
Nominated By - Jessica**

What has the individual done ?

Been there for me since I was 16 helped me a lot even when I had a child and was in hospital she would ring me every day been so much of a support

What impact did it have?

It made a huge impact in my life she has always been there for support and guidance best support I have ever had and I can't be more thankful for her

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

She is always there for me and others, she is supportive and always try's her best

**Name: Helen Nickrolls,
Northamptonshire
Nominated By - Murat Noka**

What has the individual done ?

Helen, an extraordinary personal adviser, has been a steadfast source of support and empowerment in my journey through university and beyond. Her exceptional dedication and personalised guidance have been instrumental in navigating the challenges I've faced. With a deep commitment to your success, Helen has gone beyond the call of duty, ensuring I have the tools and confidence needed to excel. Moreover, Helen's unwavering encouragement extended beyond academia. She created a safe space for open conversations, where I could discuss concerns about life transitions, well-being, and personal growth. Her mentorship helped you navigate the complexities of adulthood, fostering resilience and self-assurance. Helen's extraordinary commitment to my holistic well-being, academic achievement, and personal development has transformed my journey. Her steadfast support continues to propel you forward, illustrating the profound impact a dedicated personal adviser can have on an individual's life.

What impact did it have?

It has had a massive positive impact overall. Not something specific.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Helen consistently shows genuine care and understanding of the challenges and emotions I face. Her empathetic approach creates a safe and supportive environment, enabling me as an individual to open up about my concerns.

Recognising that each person's journey is unique, Helen tailors her advice and support to individual needs, aspirations, and circumstances. This personalised approach demonstrates her commitment to helping individuals succeed on their own terms. Beyond academic matters, Helen's holistic approach includes addressing emotional well-being, personal growth, and life transitions. She recognises the importance of nurturing the overall development of those under her care.

Name: Lisa Parr, Northern Ireland
Nominated By - Dannielle Gibson

What has the individual done ?

Lisa Parr is an excellent Personal Advisor to a caseload of 20 young people known to the 14 Plus Leaving and Aftercare Service. Lisa goes above and beyond in her role as PA to ensure her young people are supported accordingly, responds to crisis intervention as and when required, creates bespoke support plans for high risk young people to include Unaccompanied and Asylum Seeking Young People and voluntarily works beyond her contracted hours to assist in supporting Unaccompanied Young People to become orientated within the local community. For example, providing transport and support to attend local sporting events, support groups and other activities after 5pm. Lisa has worked as part of a vital core group with an Unaccompanied Young Person who is deemed high risk within the team. Lisa continues to persevere to establish a working relationship with this young person to ensure their needs are met despite daily challenges and often levels of hostility from the service user.

Lisa is highly tuned in to the needs of her service user group and utilises the support of her team leader and Senior Social Work Practitioner on a daily basis to ensure she is supporting her young people to the best of her ability.

What impact did it have?

Lisa's dedication, perseverance and commitment to the young person discussed above has resulted in the young person becoming somewhat more tolerant to support from a specific core group which Lisa forms part of. Lisa has developed a working relationship with the young person by providing a safe space for the young person, embedded in safety, security & familiarity despite levels of hostility and challenges.

Lisa's work with this service user group has allowed for the development of bespoke support plans to ensure the needs of the service user group are being met to the highest standard. Lisa has tuned in to the bespoke trauma experiences of this service user group which in turn has supported and provided an excellent example to other Personal Advisors within the service.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Lisa is a highly skilled Personal Advisor with many personal qualities to include kindness, understanding, empathy, patience and awareness. Lisa's professional qualities provide an excellent exemplar to other members of the team. For example, promoting anti-oppressive practice, advocating on behalf of the young person to the highest standard, unconditional positive regard, congruence, empathy, self-awareness, active listening skills, communication (both verbal and non-verbal) and promoting the use of trauma informed practice in difficult and challenges circumstances to meet the immediate safeguarding needs of her young people. Lisa continues to enhance her personal and professional qualities through her role as PA and will continue to do so as she embarks on her journey to become a Social Worker through the Open University Social Work Degree. Lisa has confidence in her role & as Lisa's Team Leader I am confident she will be an excellent Social Worker, promoting the rights of her young people and ensuring their welfare is paramount in her practice.

Name: Alex Norris, Southwark
Nominated By - Jonas Agambire

What has the individual done ?

Mr Norris has been a strong voice and advocate. He has and continue to champion a course for vulnerable care-experienced young people within the London Borough of Southwark. He has delivered training to the wider service in Southwark, on supporting care-experienced young people who identify as LGBTQ+. This helped create awareness within the wider service, of care-experienced young people's support needs, resources within the community and how these resources could be accessed in meeting their identified areas of need.

Mr Norris also played an important role in facilitating and organising trips to important community-based clubs and organisations. Some of these organisations and clubs provide useful activities that distract young people involved risky behaviours including criminal exploitation etc. Mr Norris recently organised a trip for Southwark's care-experienced young people to Crystal Palace Football Club which was a positive experience for these vulnerable young people.

Mr Norris has also supported young people to receive grants that have contributed to paying off arrears and providing essential items for their homes.

What impact did it have?

Mr Norris raised awareness of the needs of care-experienced LGBTQ+ living in and around Southwark in London and to has circulated resources that staff can use. This contributed to Southwark's offer of extra-curricular activities available to young people and increased their access to finances during the cost-of-living crisis.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Mr Norris has demonstrated patience and understanding when working with care-experienced young people and has been creative and resourceful in coming up with solutions to the problems they face.

Name: Ellie Lynd, Wiltshire
Nominated By - Tracie Smith

What has the individual done ?

Proving Ellie's drive to ensure care leavers are supported and not socially isolated Ellie arranged a care leavers fun day in August. Hiring a hall and DJ, food was grazing boards, with an ice cream van for a sweet treat. A glass painting table, glitter table, free raffle, sumo suits, sports games football and rounders, space to chill and mingle creating a balance for our care leavers.

A photo booth area with a balloon arch and props, making memories of the day. A separate area for young Mums with their children with sensory soft play. All travel was funded. A display area with information on the care leavers promise and services offered. The day was a huge success you could see our care leavers growing in confidence and making new friends.

This would not off been possible without the drive and determination of Ellie.

Ellie brought her vision to life tapping into local businesses who made donations to the food and raffle prices.

Of course the day could never off been a success without the care leavers themselves who got to spend time with their peers and personal advisors with no agenda but have fun!!

What impact did it have?

This brought care leavers together, allowing them a safe space to meet new people and make friends. It was a time that could also be spent with their personal advisors strengthening relationships. The event was supported by our senior management team they came and supported engaging with all the care leavers. An example one care leaver started a conversation with the director and family and children about frustrations with housing delays, this meant a quick response to identify anyone waiting and how we move it forward.

Often visits and time with our young people is led by need or crisis, understandably but this gave an opportunity to just have time out, get to know one another and have FUN!!!!

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Ellie shines bright in her work, Ellie was able to work with her colleagues to see the value in a day just for care leavers creating a safe space to chill, make new friends and spend time with their personal advisors in a relaxed setting.

Ellie over saw a group of personal advisors allocating tasks monitoring this to ensure all was achieved in time offering direction when needed. Ellie organised the event with what others would enjoy in mind, including different areas and activities so everyone was included in the event.

Ellie is a dedicated member of our team, respected by her peers who will go to her for advice and support. Ellie is able to build trusting, meaningful relationships with the young people, this means she is able to work openly and support their life aspirations.

Ellie just cares, she works hard to help others see their own value.

**Name: Jasmine Johnson, Derbyshire
Nominated By - Leanne Christian**

What has the individual done ?

Jasmine, with care experience herself, goes over and above every single day for the young people she supports. She is the biggest advocate for young people's rights and entitlements and was an integral part of supporting the design of our co-produced local offer and guide to support fellow colleagues and young people with a comprehensive set up home allowance guide.

She never leaves young people struggling, often keeping in touch with those in crisis over evenings and weekends.

A young person recently described her as not just a worker, but a part of her family who is always there for her, no matter what. Another example of her commitment is travelling 300 miles to support one of her young people to have family time with her daughter on her 1st birthday, as the responsible LA were struggling with capacity and so without this, family time would not have gone ahead.

She always finds creative ways to see those who are harder to reach, never giving up on them and developing relationships where young people want to work with her. She naturally nurtures and role models her colleagues to adopt an encompassing parenting role, and everyone looks up to her.

What impact did it have?

The impact Jasmine has on her young people is evident. They feel unconditionally supported and cared for as she naturally asserts a balance of parental guidance and boundaries with nurture, affection and aspiration. She celebrates her young people always, and recently took a gift and card to one of her young people who had suffered a bereavement to show how much she cared which, made that young person's day.

Her colleagues see her as an inspiration, as she brings a positive outlook, critical reflection and a child focused, think family approach to work every single day. She is a role model who workers seek out for guidance and advice because the outcomes she achieves for young people are clear to see.

Wider colleagues such as social workers, managers, IRO's and senior managers are full of praise about her responsiveness, creativeness and positive relationship building skills.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Jasmine doesn't see how great she is which is testament to how naturally gifted she is as a pa. She appropriately utilises her care experience to shape and improve outcomes for young people, volunteering to be part of systemic developments, and always promoting co production with young people. Despite her own confidence challenges, her young people never receive a deficit service. In fact, her young people are gifted with a committed, passionate, inspiring and dedicated worker who becomes part of their family. Her work is consistently of a high standard including thorough, regularly reviewed and co-produced pathway plans which are used to role model best practice. She sees her young people regularly, going over and above when they are struggling, or are more challenging to reach.

She knows her young people inside out, including their care journey as she understands the impact of trauma on current behaviours and presentations.

Name: Kelly Kershaw, Derbyshire
Nominated By - Cheryl Hayward

What has the individual done ?

Kelly has worked really hard to bring stability for the more complex, harder to reach young people in our service. One of our young men said that he would not be where he is now had it not been for her support. Prior to Kelly working with him he was on the run from the Police, heavily involved in criminality and in fear for his life. Kelly was persistent, nurturing, reliable and responsive to his needs. He now has his own place to live and has been leading a positive life since leaving prison a year ago. This young man said Kelly is "like a mum" to him and this is why she sometimes got the less filtered side of his communication. His respect and appreciation for her support, however, has led him to recognising that Kelly has only ever wanted the best for him.

Kelly excels at working with young people who find it hard to hear the word "no." She is aspirational for those that have had others give up on them. She does not take "no" for an answer when it comes to pushing them to believe in themselves.

Kelly celebrates the achievements with the young person, no matter how big or small. She is flexible in her approach and she ensures that she is available and reliable. Kelly has celebrated taking her young people to their first Uni residence and equally, she has been there to comfort a heartbroken young person. She is there, rain and shine. She is the first to call a young person to wish them a happy birthday or to support them through a difficult situation. She sees them as an extension of her children and her ethos is that whatever she would want for her children, she wants for her care experienced young people.

What impact did it have?

Kelly's particular skills come out when working with young people who have experienced multiple

rejections and therefore struggle with forming positive relationships. She helps restore their line of communication when the young person has struggled to respond positively. She has role modelled what a positive, nurturing, caring relationship looks like, no matter the circumstances and no matter whether it was for a duty call or because she has worked with them for years. Kelly is probably one of the most organised people I have ever met and she is a great advocate for making sure our young people get the same opportunities as those who are not care experienced. She will sort out messy paperwork with her young people, debt issues and general chaos in a thorough and methodical manner. This then helps the young person to see the benefit of these skills and it helps them to develop further.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Kelly not only makes such a difference on an individual level but also on a team level. I know that I can ask Kelly to support a young person

and she will do it thoroughly and promptly. She will not give up on anything and she will make sure she gets resolutions for her young people. I can ask her to solve a problem and I know that the young person will get support above and beyond my expectations and my expectations are high!

Kelly is specifically good at supporting young people who find themselves in custody. Her sense of humour, mixed with her strong morale compass means that she gets the best out of those she works with. She wants the best for them, she articulates this and then supports them to achieve it.

Kelly pushes herself to improve her own skills and knowledge. If she does not know something she will be resourceful and she will find solutions, no matter how creative she needs to get. Kelly is completely invested in ensuring we never give up on our young people and that others also invest in the same way. Her impact is evident by the good outcomes achieved by her young people, even when the odds were against them. She tells them she is proud of them all of the time and we want her to know that we are proud of her. This is why I have nominated her for this award.

Name: Wayne Christy, Milton Keynes
Nominated By - Katie Connolly

What has the individual done ?

Wayne has continued developing our New2UK group. He has established a weekly football training session that not only has 30+ attendees each week, it also celebrates cultural events, supports care experienced young people to achieve their aspirations, it is a social group and many friendships have formed here.

Wayne has worked many weekends taking our young people across England to play other Local Authorities, he has advocated to ensure that the team has their own kit and that all young people have sports wear suitable for the sessions. He has welcomed care experienced young people from other LAs living in MK to join in and ensures that the group is inclusive to all.

Wayne is always listening to the young people and developing the group further - they have recently asked to become part of a local league which Wayne is tirelessly trying to develop.

When I attend the group it is evident that Wayne is doing a fantastic job. The young people tell me he is "the best" and they are very happy there. They have told me that they want to play in a league with good quality football - something Wayne is already working on. We know that with so many young people involved we may possibly need a few leagues as Wayne is keen that no one is left out. Sadly one of the members of this group passed away this summer and Wayne has emotionally support the young people through this. They are in the process of organising a tribute football tournament to this young person in October.

What impact did it have?

The impact on the service is huge. It helps those new to the country have a space where they can meet new friends, seek support and enjoy a social event. Whilst the majority of the young people there play football there are others who attend to watch and join in the social event after.

It has afforded our young people the opportunity to attend tournaments across England.

They always travel on a minibus which Wayne drives and the young people describe the journey / sights / day as just as enjoyable as the matches.

Playing a sport offers our young people both physical and mental health benefits as does becoming part of a team. Other organisations / services also attend the football group and are able to offer wider opportunities to our young people. The relationships formed here are amazing and often lifelong.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Wayne has demonstrated continued commitment to our young people. He is enthusiastic and reliable and encourages all to participate. He has developed a sense of inclusivity where all young people no matter their skills are valued. It is evident that Wayne is a great listener, he has time for all the young people and ensures that all cultural events are respected and celebrated as a group.

Name: Kirstie Burns, Surrey
Nominated By - Emma Wheadon

What has the individual done ?

Kristie currently holds a complex caseload of Care Leavers, alongside the management of two Personal

Advisors. This responsibility includes case supervision for 43 young people, alongside care planning discussions and case progression for almost 60 young people. Kristie has been key in progressing positive outcomes for young people as well as her successful management of Freda Ahmed who has been nominated for the Rising Star award.

Kristie not only provides complete high quality supervision and management oversights, but is instrumental in the overall running of our team. Kristie is both our Autism champion and our Housing representative and has completed extensive work with Mental Health services, domestic abuse services and internal risk management panels to promote the safety and well-being of care leavers. Kristie has been involved in projects surrounding social housing and is our team training lead from which her knowledge and understanding of current practices remains exceptional.

What impact did it have?

As Team Manager, I can recognise Kristie's role in my own learning and development and I consider this to have a positive impact upon both care leavers and our service going forward.

Kristie is both reflective and realistic in her thinking and is able to balance the needs of young people against the needs of the service. Kristie is confident in supporting the team in my absence and is considered approachable and fair in her interactions with PAs by management at both operational and strategic levels.

Kristie has successfully mentored one PA to the point of nomination for Rising Star and has been integral in achieving positive outcomes for our most complex cohort of young people.

Kristie has also taken responsibility for developing the training needs of the team, and in becoming champion, has been able to share her learning with PAs to promote young people's successful transition into independence.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Kristie has worked in the Care Leavers Service since January 2018 and has grown from strength to strength in her role development, progressing from Personal Advisor to Senior Practitioner. Kristie is measured and articulate in her approach and is very balanced in her work ethic as a practicing Personal Advisor with management responsibilities. Kristie is both nurturing and encouraging and is able to provide constructive criticism whilst offering advice and learning opportunities to empower those around her. Kristie evidences her ability to escalate care planning concerns well and is confident in both her written work and presentation within meetings. Kristie manages this whilst maintaining long lasting, trusting relationships with those care leavers allocated to her to. Kristie is fully invested in her young people and remains a strong advocate for them from which she has been able to achieve numerous success stories for our care leavers successfully transitioning into independence.

Name: Calnetha Allen, Surrey
Nominated By - Gerald Buckley

What has the individual done ?

Calnetha works with was the victim of a high-profile child trafficking ring exploiting a number of young girls in the local area but were thankfully caught and are facing trial.

The young girl was known to Children Services almost from birth and endured significant challenges in her childhood before being taken into care around her 15th birthday. When the girl was 17 1/2, Calnetha was allocated her case. At this point, there was significant police involvement, regular missing episodes, reports of drug and alcohol use and on-going exploitation.

Calnetha's approach to the young girl was to be up front, honest and direct in a manner that the young girl could understand and be confident that she was being supported, receiving good advice and not being judged for her actions. Calnetha and the girl built up a trusting relationship and the young girl felt she could confide in Calnetha.

Calnetha established firm professional boundaries which the young girl reacted positively to - she felt she was being treated as a mature young woman rather than just a 'victim' - and she was being listened to.

What impact did it have?

The young girl now recognizes that her past relationships were characterized by exploitation and dishonesty. The young girl continues to confide in Calnetha and to discuss her current relationships asking for advice and ensuring that she is not leaving herself open to exploitation again in the future. The risks have diminished significantly over the last 10 months to the extent where the young girl has now secured her own social housing with support from Calnetha.

When one part of the criminal proceedings was dropped by police, Calnetha was able to support the young girl to understand the reasons behind this and to support her in a manner that avoided her retreating into believing that she could not trust adults again. This was at a time when professional network were very concerned about the young girl returning to relationships that would have been abusive.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Calnetha has had to listen to this young girl report harrowing accounts and intimate details of her exploitation. Calnetha has had to remain non-judgmental and professional throughout these discussions. Calnetha has often had to relay these details to other professionals - the young girl was aware Calnetha would have to do this - and has done so with a level of professionalism that is not often attributed to Personal Advisors. Recalling details like this has an emotional impact even on the most seasoned professional.

Calnetha also nurtured relationships with other professionals involved in this case; police, health, residential providers. Meetings were held regularly with the network and the exchange of information helped to keep the young girl safe and develop plans for her future.

The ability to build a positive, trusting relationship in such circumstances should not be under-valued, gaining confidence of a young person in these circumstances is outstanding.

Name: Irfan Khan, Lancashire
Nominated By - Katy Waddington

What has the individual done ?

Irfan has always had high aspirations for the young people he works with. This year he has had 3 of his young people go to university that would not have got there if it wasn't for his support. Irfan has used creative care planning to ensure that the young people felt supported and confident to strive to go to university. These young people were close to giving up on education in the last year but Irfan has gone the extra mile, which included some brave decisions on accommodation. These decisions have helped the young people feel settled enough to achieve their goals.

What impact did it have?

Irfan has made applications for a "care leavers package". This is only awarded to 20 young people over the whole country. His young person was accepted and as a result she has her accommodation paid for the whole time she is at Uni.

She has said that this will set her up for life and mean that when she finishes Uni she will have less debt and hopefully be able to buy a house.

What personal and professional attributes has the person demonstrated to receive this nomination?

Irfan's personal attributes for this award is his absolute dedication to all the young people he works with. He has high aspirations for them all and always strives to ensure that all of his young people succeed no matter how big or little their goals might be. He has such a knack for building their confidence and I always get amazing feedback from his young people.